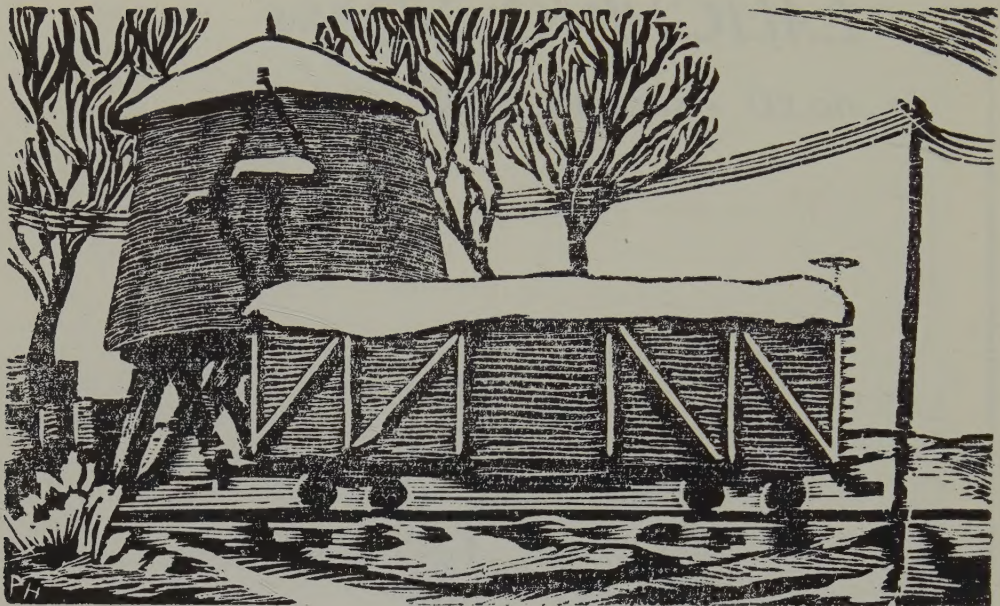


LAUGHING HORSE

no.20 = summer, 1938 = 25cts.




*edited and printed by
spud johnson, taos, new mexico*




Spring Snow, Roswell

by Paul Horgan



We Moved To Pomona

by Lynn Riggs



THE beer was bad and the ham and egg sandwich was bad, but Mr. Trimble was there and Mr. Trimble wanted to talk. I don't know why he picked on us. We were on the way to Arizona, and had just stopped to keep from straving, though neither one of us liked the looks of the place. It had a shabby frame front on the road, and through an arch of withered palm leaves, a sort of back yard, with a dusty dance floor, some chairs and tables, and the whole thing covered with more dried palm leaves. It was two o'clock and we had passed up all the good places, hoping to find a better one.

At first, a girl took our order. She had black hair and was kind of dirty looking, but nice. After she found out what we wanted she banged through a screen door into the kitchen where a fat woman with a blue apron on seemed to be cooking. Mr. Trimble then came out to see if she'd got the order straight, and from then on we didn't see the girl.

"That's my daughter," said Mr. Trimble.

Name is Elsie—after her mother. That's her mother in there—she does the cookin'. Is the sandwiches all ok? I don't often let my daughter wait



on tables no more. Unless I'm around. That's because of what happened one time.

We had a place over here in Alhambra—a pretty good place, too; done a rushin' business; right on the main road. Elsie waited on tables. Had lots of truck drivers and just folks goin' through like you all. I was proud as Old Nick and makin' money. Used to get a crowd of young fellers all the time. I didn't even wonder about that for quite a while, like a fool—until I found out what was goin' on.

Elsie's right pretty, don't you think? She's always been like that and full of life and talkin' smart and just about crazy to have a good time. I didn't think much about that, either. My wife, though, she did. When Elsie was a little girl, she was always lecturin' her about life. When Elsie was ten, and we lived in Cedar Rapids, I heard my wife tell her one day: "Elsie, remember what I tell you. Go out and have you a good time, all you want to, but just one thing—don't let none of these old dirty boys get you down."

"What d'you mean, Maw—git me down?" Elsie asked her.

"Fer God's sake, shet up!" I told my wife. "That ain't no way to talk to a ten-year-old girl."

"Oh, if she ever does!" my wife said. "If she ever does!" an' kep' repeating it till I got plumb mad. Just imagine a womern goin' on like that! I do' know what was the matter with her. You'd think sump'n



like that had got on her mind and wouldn't get off, the damn fool.

I blame her for what happened. I blame Elsie, too, but not as much. She was just full of the devil and couldn't help it, I guess.

Well, we had all these young fellers, and Elsie used to wait on 'em. She'd fly around takin' orders, and makin' wise-cracks to all of 'em, and my wife 'ud cook, and I'd cook, and we was as busy as bees, and makin' money.

Sometimes, when I was in the kitchen openin' beer, or fryin' up a steak—we had a place sump'n like this; you could see out'n the back this way, only instead o' palm leaves, we had vines an' bushes: it was prettier'n this—sometimes I'd see one of the fellers make a pass at Elsie, grab a-hold of her hand when she'd put down some fried 'taters, or git down, kinda under the table, an' rub her leg; but I never thought nothing o' that. It helped the business to have a good-lookin' girl around, naturally, and anyways Elsie 'ud say: "Hey, you big baboon!" and give the guy a slap, so I thought ever'thing was O.K. Wouldn't you have?

There was a big, tall, curley-headed truck driver named Art, used to be in there all the time. He was a big roughneck, but full of life an' good-lookin' an' always jokin'. "Mr. Trimble," he'd yell out, top of his lungs. "I found a rusty nail in my pie. Is it a prize or what, for Christ's sake!" He'd pick out a time to do it when the place was full of strange people, the



damn fool. And of course there wasn't no rusty nail in his pie a-tall. Maybe sometime they'd be a hair or some little somethin', but not often. He was just havin' him a big time. It used to worry me—I was afraid he'd spoil trade. But it didn't—ever'body seemed to know it was a joke. So after my first mad at him, I kind of liked him. I did till this happened that caused all the trouble.

Moonlight in California is somethin', you know that. Not like back East, where the moon is kind of cold. Out here it hangs up in the sky and yellow as hell and big as a tub. In Alhambra it used to shine bright as day sometimes, and made you feel funny inside, like you was a young galoot just startin' out in life, and all hopped up about the girls. And even my age, I used to get all shaky just to look at it.

One night it was moonlight like I told you, and I couldn't sleep. I was tired, too, for we'd had a rush. But about two o'clock I just got out of bed and put on my clothes. I was restless and the moon was sure pretty. I felt like a young colt. I went out in the kitchen and got me a big glass of water and drunk it down; then I tiptoed through the bedroom again and went and stood out in the road. There was orange trees in bloom all around, and you know what that is. My God, what a night! It was more'n you could stand—and I ain't one of these Beauty-bugs like lots of people nowadays. It was just pretty, and by God, that was that!



"... and drunk it down."

by Vernon Hunter



A car come along the highway, with its lights on, but just as it got to the orange trees, it stopped and turned off its lights. I couldn't see nothin' but I could guess. Then I heard a sound out in back and went around to see if it was a stray dog in the garbage can or something.

This place in back, too, was just a picture. Lots of black shadows where the lattice fell down like a checkerboard pattern, an' the trees was almost white in the strong light. Only around the edges, we had these bushes with orange colored flowers on 'em, high as your waist. It was kind of dark there, and that's the only place that was. The sound came from there.

Now the garbage can wasn't over there; it was closer to the kitchen hid behind some little bushes. So I stepped on over there where the sound was coming from, to see what it was.

Well, I don't know how I got started tellin' you this—but I might as well go on. I can see you're just transients, an' like as not you'll never stop here again: most transients don't. So I don't know as it matters.

Anyway, it wasn't very nice. As I got closer, the sound stopped. Then there was a squeak, like somebody's voice or a rat or sump'n, I couldn't tell. Then I saw Art's head — I could see ever' curl on it, as he kind of rose up into sight. I'xpec' you've guessed by this time: Elsie was there too. In a minute she sorta got up. My God, I was mad! "Why, you dirty, you dirty — !" I yelled at Art. I don't know what I said.

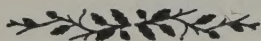


My God, right in my own back yard! I was so mad I couldn't do nothing but just stand there an' call him ever'thing I could think of. But then came the worst part. Art was mad by this time, an' he begin to tell me.

"Aw, fer Chris' sake, you ol' son of a bitch!" he says. "Aw, fer Chris' sake! I ain't the only one. Plenty of 'em's been here. I ain't the first, you big bastard, fer Chris' sake. Why d'you think y'always get a big crowd 'roun' here, you big gump, why d'you think? Eatin' yer lousy cookin'? Christ, I got ulcers!"

Well, you can guess how I felt. You can guess how my wife felt when she found out. She carried on like a mad womern for days. "Oh, I knowed it 'ud happen, I knowed it! After all I told her, too—after all I told her since the time she was ten years old. It just makes me sick!"

It made me sick, too. It preyed on my mind so I couldn't sleep—moonlight or no moonlight. So after a week, I couldn't stand the disgrace no longer. So I sold the stand and we moved to Pomona. But I don't like it so good. We don't have half the trade we had back in Alhambra. And Elsie was happier there—and she sure ain't happy here. I watch her pretty close for one thing. Sometimes I can't help wishin' I'd gone on ignorant. Sometimes I think maybe I made a mistake actin' so hasty and sellin' out so sudden. I didn't like it here when I first come, an' I like it less all the time. But what can you do?



Barranca de Oblatos

by Idella Purnell

By the straw-made hut
Under the immense wall of the canyon,
Where the mango-trees were tall to the sun,
You and I watched the river,
The red Santiago river, flow by.

Above, the sky leaned over.
The orange-yellow mangoes hung ripe,
And in the silence
Fell with the thunderous crash of a cannon
On the bed of brown leaves below.

A woman walked down the slope,
Her straight shoulders supporting a red jar
Of spring water.
She smiled at us:
"For your thirst."

We gave her a coin and she smiled again:
"God will bless you . . ."
We looked at each other
And in our eyes discovered
Her prophecy fulfilled.



Editorial Note

On the following pages, we present the fragmentary beginnings of a comedy which D.H. Lawrence started to write in Taos more than ten years ago.

He scribbled the opening lines on the back of a candy box one evening in Mabel Luhan's living room, with several friends present offering suggestions as to who the characters should be and what they should do and say. It was an amusing game, and few of those who played it knew until many years later that the next day Lawrence finished this first scene and began a second. Unfortunately, the play was never finished.

Although it is obvious that, contrary to custom, *none of the characters are fictitious*, it should be clearly understood that the "Mary" of the play is by no means the late Mary Austin; that "Mabel" is certainly not the author of *Lorenzo in Taos*; that "Ida" is not, as you might suspect, Ida Rauh Eastman; that "Clarence" is not also named Thompson; and that Lujan is not the patronymic of "Tony." "Mrs. Sprague," although her first name is Alice, should not be confused with Mrs. Carleton Sprague of New York City; Elizabeth is not Mabel Luhan's adopted daughter; and of course you realize that the "Spud" mentioned, is not the editor of this magazine.

We are indebted to Mrs. Frieda Lawrence, and to The Viking Press, for permission to print this fragment; and to Mr. Jake Zeitlin for copying the original manuscript while it was on exhibition in the Los Angeles Public Library.





THE CHARACTERS

in the order of their appearance

[Graciously described by the Editor]

MARY: A Woman With Ideas, who can also cook.

SPUD: Referred to as a "Young Intellectual," but obviously not.

CLARENCE: A "Young Aesthete," addicted to rose-coloured trousers and jewels.

MILKMAN: Just that.

IDA: A Dramatic Actress, even at breakfast.

MRS. SPRAGUE: A benign wraith.

MABEL: A determined lady who always knows what she wants—and gets it.

INDIAN: Whose name is Joe.

TONY: An American Indian philosopher, Mabel's husband.

ELIZABETH: Younger and blonder than the others.



The play is illustrated by
GINA KNEE



ALTITUDE

the first scene of an unfinished play

by D. H. Lawrence

[The curtain rises, revealing the kitchen of Mabel's house at Taos. Mary stands in the sunny doorway, chanting to herself, saying "Om" resoundingly.]

MARY

This country is waiting. It lies spell-bound, waiting. The great South-West, America of America. It is waiting. . . . What for? What for?

[Enter Spud, taking in the situation at a glance.]

SPUD

Hello! Hasn't the cook come?

MARY

Good morning! No sign of her as yet. . . . Isn't morning wonderful, here at this altitude, in the great South-West? Does it kindle no heroic response in you, young Intellectual?

SPUD

I don't know. Maybe I'd better kindle a fire in the stove.

MARY

Quite right! Homage to the god of fire. Wait! An apron! Let me do it. The fire in this house is the woman's fire. The fire in the camp is the man's fire. You know the Indians say that?

SPUD

No, I didn't know it till you told me.



MARY

Oh, young Intellectual! It is a Woman Mediator you are pin-
ing for. The Woman Redeemer!

SPUD

Maybe! Does this look like an apron?

MARY

[Girding on the apron, and busy at the stove.]

To do, to know, and to be! Hamlet had hold of only one-third
of the twisted string.

[Enter Clarence in rose-colored trousers and much jewellery.]

CLARENCE

Oh, good-morning, Mary! Good-morning, Spud. — Why, Mary,
won't you let Emilia do that?

MARY

Do you see any Emilia in the neighbourhood?

CLARENCE

Why, no, I don't. Is it possible she's not coming? Oh, what
a calamity!

MARY

A contretemps, not a calamity, young Idealist. The heroic na-
ture is ready for every emergency. Woman is the great go-between.
When the cook does not turn up, *I* am the cook. Mary and Mar-
tha should be one person.

SPUD

What about Magdalene?

MARY

The men will play *her* role.



CLARENCE

Oh, but do let me do this.

MARY

Do what ?

CLARENCE

Make a fire and all that.

MARY

The wood-box is empty: bring in some wood. [*He goes out.*]

SPUD

Oh, I wish Mabel weren't so temperamental.

MARY

Thank God for Mabel's temperament, young Intellectual.
Where would you be without it ?

SPUD

Why, I might get my coffee.

MARY

You get more than coffee from Mabel.

SPUD

Maybe I do. But it's rough on an empty stomach.

[*Enter Clarence; lays wood on kitchen table.*]

MARY

In the wood-box, young Dreamer !

CLARENCE

Oh, so sorry !

MARY

Brains and dreams won't start a stove. Hands, muscles, and common-sense must be ready for any emergency, in the new mystic we are bringing into the world.



CLARENCE

I'll take Mabel her breakfast in bed. That will be much the best.

[*The Milkman suddenly appears at the door.*]

MILKMAN

How much ? Got the empty bottles ? Any cream ?

SPUD

Oh, yess ! Let's have cream !

CLARENCE

Mabel only lets us have it on Sundays.

MARY

A pint of cream, two quarts of milk. The cook will give you the bottles tomorrow. [*Exit Milkman, slamming the screen door.*]

Clarence follows him out and rings the gong loudly.]

SPUD

Why, what is he ringing for ?

MARY

No doubt he thinks the bell will bring the breakfast, as the rooster thinks he brings the sun with his noise. It is all part of the male vanity. Woman brings the breakfast, meanwhile.

SPUD

And I suppose she has some hand in making the sun rise, too ?

MARY

Certainly. It is the great creative spirit of Woman, the perfect-
ed Woman, that keeps the sun in stable equilibrium.

SPUD

[*sniggering*] Do you say she keeps the sun in her stable ?

[*Enter Ida*]

IDA

Oh-h! I thought it was breakfast.



MARY

Lay the table, Ida.

IDA

For everybody?

[Enter Mrs. Sprague in white muslin. She hovers, then sits at table and looks benignly at the stray bits of wood left there by Clarence, who re-enters at this moment.]

CLARENCE

Oh—er, Good-morning! Good-morning, Mrs. Sprague; how did you sleep? Good-morning, Ida!

IDA

We're supposed to be laying the table.

MRS. SPRAGUE

Oh yes! Oh yes! [Picks up a tumbler and wanders around with it.]

[Mabel pops in through the dining-room door.]

MABEL

Where's breakfast? Where's Emilia? Who rang that bell?

CLARENCE

I rang the bell, Mabel. I thought we might as well all know that cook isn't coming. — Won't you go back to bed? Please do! You'll be so much more comfortable.

MABEL

[rushing at stove] Where's the coffee? Where's the coffee-pot? Is that water boiling?

MARY

Mabel, I am making the coffee.

MABEL

It's got to boil. It's got to boil several minutes. I want it strong, so it's got to boil.



MARY

Mabel, you may trust many things to me, the least of them being the coffee. Won't you all sit down and discuss the situation, while I solve it?

MABEL

The bacon! [*Rushes into pantry and emerges with a side of bacon*] Who can cut bacon *thin*? It's got to be cut *thin*. I want it dry. Cut it, somebody, and I'll cook it.

CLARENCE

[*with dignity*] I'll cut it, Mabel. Where is a knife?

[*Mabel rushes across and produces a huge knife. Clarence proceeds to saw bacon, on the table-cloth.*]

IDA

Not on the table-cloth, Clarence.

MABEL

[*snatching knife*] Not so *thick*! Somebody cut the bacon who can cut it *thin*. [*silence*] Spud, come and cut the bacon.

SPUD

[*reluctantly*] I'll try. My god, be careful with that knife; you look like a Chicago aesthetic. [*crouches on floor to cut bacon.*]

INDIAN

[*in dooway*] Hello!

MABEL

Hello, Joe! No cook this morning. You know how to cook?

INDIAN

No.

MARY

Will one of our young Intellectuals go to the well for water?



MABEL

[*to Indian*] Fetch a pail of water, Joe. [*Joe goes out with pail.*]

MARY

Don't you notice, the moment an Indian comes into the landscape, how all you white people seem so *meaningless*, so ephemeral?

IDA

Why, yes! I was just thinking how ephemeral you all looked when Joe picked up the pail.

MABEL

[*snorts*] It is extraordinary! It's because the Indians have *life*. They have *life*, where we have *nerves*. Haven't you noticed, Mary, at an Indian dance, when the Indians all sit banked up on one side, and the white people on the other, how *all* the life is on the Indian side, and the white people seem so dead? The Indians are like glowing coals, and the white people are like ashes.

IDA

Well, Mabel, and which side are you on?

MABEL

[*snorts again*] The Indian!

MARY

There is something which *combines* the red and the white, the Indian and the American, and is greater than either.

MABEL

[*rushing at Spud*] That's enough bacon, Spud.

SPUD

[*rising*] I don't know that I feel so *ashy* at an Indian dance.

IDA

No, neither do I, Spud. [*Spud examines his finger, critically.*]



CLARENCE

And *I certainly* don't get any glow from the Indians.

MABEL

Well, you all know what I mean. And you do *all feel* it. Anyway, you *look* it.

IDA

Perhaps we're the ashes of your stormy past, Mabel, and you see in the Indians the red glow of your future. — But, my dear, it's all red paint.

CLARENCE

Exactly: The paint they've daubed on their faces.

SPUD

The danger signal.

MRS. SPRAGUE

Have you cut your finger?

SPUD

A little.

IDA

Suck it, Spud.

SPUD

I *am* sucking it.

[Joe re-enters with the pail.]

INDIAN

Here's the water.

MABEL

All right, Joe. You can go and chop some wood if you like.

[Joe grunts, doesn't like, but goes out. Mabel rushes at the stove]

I'll fry the bacon, Mary.

MARY

Mabel, I *am* officiating at this altar.



MABEL

But I want my bacon dry, *dry*! You others can have it as you want it, but I want mine dry.

MARY

You shall have it as dry as the Arizona desert, Mabel.

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Oh, what about Professor Mack? Is he still desiccating in the Arizona desert, studying the habits and misbehaviours of the Cactus?

MABEL

He's coming here.

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Why, how thrilling! Don't you feel awfully bucked, Mary?

MARY

Professor Mack and I have had a perfect correspondence all our lives. This is the first time we shall have slept under the same roof.

IDA

How extraordinary! I wonder what the *roof* will feel about it.

MABEL

Let's sit down now. [*they all sit at table.*] Well, [*ominously*] here we all are.

SPUD

Minus a few of us.

MABEL

How are you, Alice? You've not said anything yet.

MRS. SPRAGUE

Why, I'm fine, Mabel. How are you?

MABEL

Fine! [*snorts*] How is everybody? How are you, Spud? Ida?



SPUD

Fine !

IDA

Fine !

MABEL

Mary, how d'you feel this morning ?

MARY

Why, fine !

CLARENCE

If you were going to ask me how I feel, Mabel, I feel fine, perfectly fine. It's *wonderful* to be here.

MABEL

Ye-es ! You're *looking* marvellous. But you're not going down to the Plaza in those trousers ?

CLARENCE

Why, yes. I wasn't going to take them off to go down town.

MABEL

What's the idea ?

CLARENCE

As you said, we all *feel* so fine, I thought I'd try to look as fine as I felt.

MABEL

But why in trousers ? Why look it in trousers ?

CLARENCE

But why not ? You wouldn't have me try to look it *without* trousers. No, Mabel ! If we *feel* wonderful, and we *are* perhaps rather wonderful, I think it's up to us to come out in our own feathers.

MABEL

Yes, but why feather your legs ?



CLARENCE

I'll take Mabel her breakfast in bed. That will be much the best.

[The Milkman suddenly appears at the door.]

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As you said, we all *feel* so fine, I thought I'd try to look as fine as I felt.

MABEL

But why in trousers ? Why look it in trousers ?

CLARENCE

But why not ? You wouldn't have me try to look it *without* trousers. No, Mabel ! If we *feel* wonderful, and we *are* perhaps rather wonderful, I think it's up to us to come out in our own feathers.

MABEL

Yes, but why feather your legs ?



CLARENCE

But why not?

MABEL

It's an exhibitionist complex.

IDA

Mabel, I don't think you can quite say that. I *admire* rose-coloured trousers.

MABEL

Yes, all right, indoors. But not to go down to the Plaza. They're all wrong in the Plaza. Think how the people will *jeer*—and then talk. Another sign of vice from over here.

CLARENCE

But what does it matter whether they jeer and talk—I shall go perfectly unconscious of them, in my rose-coloured trousers.

MABEL

You won't! You can't! You'll be conscious all the time. You'll be conscious all the time that they're jeering at you, and then you'll get all tied up over it afterwards.

CLARENCE

I assure you, Mabel, I *should* have gone to the Plaza in my rose-coloured trousers *perfectly* unconscious of everybody, if you hadn't started this difficulty.

MABEL

I bet you wouldn't. You *couldn't*. Anyhow, what do you want to go to the Plaza for in rose-coloured trousers? *What* are you conscious of, when you wear them?

CLARENCE

[*with hauteur*] Of *feeling* wonderful, and, I hope, of looking it.



"Well, I guess I eat a can of sardines."



MABEL

Clarence ! You know everybody will just say you look a fool.
Not wonderful at all.

CLARENCE

I thought it didn't matter what the crowd in the Plaza says.
Anyhow, you've squashed my efforts. I shall go and take off my
trousers and never put them on again.

IDA

But you'll put on others, won't you ?

CLARENCE

Yes, *grey* ones.

IDA

But Clarence ! Wait. Why don't you walk up and down this
room a few times before *us*, and see how you feel: and we'll say
whether you're wonderful, or exhibitionist, or whatever it is.

CLARENCE

No. I shall go and take them right off.

MARY

Stick to your guns, young Aesthete.

IDA

Stick to your trousers, anyhow. No, I mean it quite fairly. Walk
up and down a few times past the sink. Yes:—there !

[Clarence *walks*. Enter Joe.]

MABEL

[*irritably*] Hello, Joe ! How're you feeling, hm ?

INDIAN

Fine !

MABEL

Can you stay help wash dishes ? Put some water in the kettle.



[Joe crosses in front of Clarence, who is walking up and down.]

CLARENCE

Excuse me, Joe, will you keep still a minute.

MABEL

I *told* him to fill the kettle.

CLARENCE

Mabel, I am acting at the request of the majority.

MABEL

You're a pure exhibitionist. I don't care about majorities, anyhow. Leave off exhibiting yourself.

IDA

Oh, but you're *fine*, Clarence ! I'm *all* for rose-coloured trousers.

CLARENCE

I shall go and take them right off.

IDA

No! No! They're wonderful.

MARY

Let us appeal to true, unspoiled taste, and hear what the vital American has got to say. Joe, what do you think of his trousers ?

INDIAN

Fine !

[Enter Tony.]

MABEL

Here's Tony ! Let's ask Tony. He sees both sides. Tony, Clarence is going to the Plaza in those trousers. What you think of it ?

TONY

[seating himself at table] Make a guy of himself, sure.

MARY

You wouldn't go down to the Plaza in them, Tony ?



TONY

Me? No. I wouldn't.

MARY

And you, Joe; would you go to the Plaza in those trousers?

INDIAN

No Mam! They're fine for a dance, for an Indian.

MABEL

That's it! You give them to Joe, Clarence.

CLARENCE

I shall not, Mabel. But I shall go and take them *right* off, and never put them on again.

IDA

Don't, Clarence! Oh, don't!

MARY

The Indian has spoken.

IDA

Then let the Jew speak. I'm a Jew, and my people are good at speaking. Clarence, I implore you, don't haul down your flag. Keep your trousers. *I'll* walk down to the Plaza with you.

MABEL

Ida! Prepare for the consequences.

IDA

What consequences, Mabel?

MABEL

All the *talk*. What'll Andrew say?

IDA

Why I'll have him paint a portrait of Clarence *in* the trousers.

SPUD

Keep them, Clarence.



MRS. SPRAGUE

They're a lovely colour; they make a bright note.

MARY

I wash my hands of them.

MABEL

But it's so *babyish*!

CLARENCE

I shall take them *right* off! [*Flounces out. A silence.*]

MRS. SPRAGUE

You know, voices have told me that Clarence is a great Initiator.

MABEL

Initiator of *what*, Alice?

IDA

The fashion in rose-coloured trousers. I agree with him entirely.

MRS. SPRAGUE

No. If we take care of him, and protect him, and *love* him, he may be a Great Teacher.

MABEL

Well, I protect him, preventing him making a guy of himself.

MARY

I think the Indians are *always* right. I doubt if any young man is capable of having a revelation. I doubt *really* if any *man* is capable of having a revelation. Next time I *really* believe it will be a *Woman*. The next Redeemer will probably, almost certainly, be a *Woman*.

MABEL

Meaning yourself, Mary? Why shouldn't *I* have the revelation?

MARY

You're not perfect, Mabel. I'm glad you're not, for I have hardly any place in my life for a woman who is both rich and perfect.



MABEL

Tony!

TONY

What?

MABEL

Like a fried egg?

TONY

Yes, I think so.

MABEL

Well, get up and fry it then. There's no cook today.

MARY

How are you this morning, Tony? It's so good to sit next you.

TONY

I'm fine.

MABEL

The Indians *do* feel fine. They always feel fine. That's because they live right. They've got something that white people haven't got. We've got to get it. That's what we're here for. That's what I married Tony for: to try and get that wonderful something that they've got and that white people haven't.

TONY

[Getting up at last and looking around vaguely] Where the eggs?

MABEL

Can't you find any? Well, maybe there aren't any. Have some marmalade.

TONY

Well, I guess I eat a can of sardines.

MABEL

Tony, you don't want a can of sardines for breakfast!



TONY

Guess I do !

MABEL

Oh, dee-ar !

[Tony unwinds sardines.]

MARY

Mabel, when you say the Indians have that wonderful thing that white people haven't got, I think *I* have it. — Joe, more wood on the fire. — The Indians have the rhythm of the earth. The earth in America has a *special* rhythm, the marvellous American rhythm. And here in Taos that rhythm is at its height.

IDA

You mean altitude ?

MARY

I mean the *perfect* rhythm. The white people still haven't got the rhythm of America, the perfect rhythm, of American earth. The Indians have had it so long, maybe they're in danger of losing it. The new revelation will come when the white people, when some white *Woman* gets the perfect rhythm of the American earth. And I think if I stay here all summer, [looks meaningly at Mabel] I shall get it.

MABEL

Well, *stay* all the summer, and let's see you get it. We want something to happen. Here we all are, a group of more or less remarkable people, in a remarkable place, at a remarkable altitude. If something doesn't happen of itself, let's *make* it happen. Let's make a Thing ! [Enter Elizabeth, eating an apple and shedding large tears.] What's the matter, Elizabeth ?

ELIZABETH

Why I'm so mad at Contentos.



MABEL

What's he done, then?

ELIZABETH

Why he's broken his bridle *again*, and got away.

MABEL

Where is he?

TONY

I tell you to take a rope—

MABEL

Go get a rope and catch him. [*Enter Clarence in grey flannels.*]

IDA

Oh, dear, the glory has departed.

CLARENCE

Yes, it intended to depart.

IDA

Too bad.

MABEL

Spud, you finished? Go get the poppies before the sun spoils them. Hurry, now.

SPUD

Well, let me drink my coffee first. [*Drinks hurriedly and departs.*]

IDA

Spud's queer this morning.

CLARENCE

Spud always seems queer, to *me*.

MABEL

Spud *is* queer. — I wonder what it is; whether we can't fix it.

MRS. SPRAGUE

He has such a swell disposition. I wonder what it can be?



CLARENCE

I don't know. Of course it mayn't *mean* anything, but I heard his door banging *all* night last night. It really seemed mysterious.

MRS. SPRAGUE

It was my door. There's no catch on it. It makes me nervous in the night.

IDA

Oh! Why doesn't Mabel have a catch *put* on the door? Of course it makes you nervous, banging in the wind.

MABEL

I forget about it, every day.

CLARENCE

I'll put a catch on the door.

[Exit]

IDA

Will he do it, do you think?

MABEL

Who, Clarence? Maybe. But he's more likely to try a safety pin.

IDA

Mabel, you can say the Indians feel fine *all the time*, and that we ought to feel the same; but what I want to know is, what do you mean by feeling fine? Feeling up to the mark, and so on?

MABEL

Oh no, none of those dreary things. I mean feeling good. You have that good feeling, don't you know, when you expand — and you make everybody around you feel wonderful. I know I do it myself. You can't help it — they've *got* to feel good, just because of the thing that's in you. You radiate life, and the people around you feel good. Haven't you seen me do it? Don't you feel it come from me?



IDA

Ye-es, maybe I do. But what does this feeling good mean? Is it just good spirits?

MABEL

No! Not any of that. Tony, you explain how the Indians feel when they feel good.

TONY

[*chewing a sardine*] Well, the Indians, they feel the sun. They feel the sun inside them, and they feel good. Like what the sun inside them, and they love everybody.

IDA

Sunshine, Tony, or moonshine inside them?

MARY

[*heavily*] Let me explain what it is. The sun is overhead, and the earth is underfoot. We live between the two—

[*At that moment, the telephone rings; Spud enters with poppies, Elizabeth behind him. Mabel jumps to the telephone; Spud poses with poppies; Elizabeth gets a cup and pours herself coffee.*

All speak at once.]

MABEL

Hello!

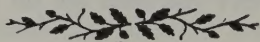
ELIZABETH

Guess I'll have a cup of coffee.

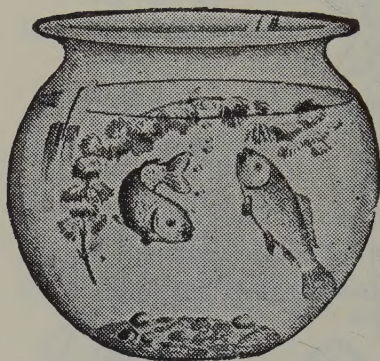
SPUD

Aren't the poppies beautiful!

[*CURTAIN*]



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